

Colleagues and Fellow Veterans,

Before this week's note – our 'mailing list' continues to grow and we appreciate all who have responded. We've tried to answer most. However, we have a host of existing resources to address your questions. This link, <https://iris.custhelp.com/>, provides access to a list of toll-free numbers and web based systems available.

Did you know that VA can provide free vocational and educational counseling services for transitioning Servicemembers and individuals eligible for GI Bill benefits (Montgomery, VR&E, Post-9/11, etc.)? Counseling can take place at a Veterans Benefits Administration Regional Office or outbased location, training facility, or military installation. After receipt of an application, a counseling appointment will be set for eligible Servicemembers and Veterans. Counseling services may include the following:

- Interest and aptitude testing
- Occupational exploration
- Assistance with setting occupational goals
- Assistance with locating an appropriate academic or training program
- Academic or adjustment counseling during training to help overcome problems or barriers during school
- Services to help prepare for a new career

As you might imagine, getting advice for any or all of those can help guide you or a Veteran to your eventual employment goals. A transitioning Servicemember is defined as a Servicemember within six months of discharge from active duty or a Veteran within one year following discharge from active duty under other than dishonorable conditions. Servicemembers and Veterans eligible for any VA education benefit may also apply. A service connected disability is not a requirement in order to be eligible for free counseling services.

To apply for counseling benefits, transitioning Servicemembers or Veterans should fill out VA Form 28-8832, ***Application for Vocational Educational Counseling***, or download the application at [www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/28-8832.pdf](http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/28-8832.pdf). Counseling services are provided by the VA's Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) program's staff or by contract counselors. For more information visit [http://www.gibill.va.gov/support/counseling\\_services/index.html](http://www.gibill.va.gov/support/counseling_services/index.html).

V/R

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*Note:* We apologize in advance if we are unable to respond directly to your questions.

**Please Remember:**

- If you would like to review prior messages sent through this listserv, click [http://benefits.va.gov/vow/economic\\_opportunity.htm](http://benefits.va.gov/vow/economic_opportunity.htm).
- If you would like to research, find, access, and, in time, manage your VA benefits and personal information please visit and/or register at <https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits-portal/ebenefits.portal>.

- If you are seeking employment in the federal government, particularly the VA, our VA for Vets high-tech tools, resources, and professional coaching services can help. Visit online at <http://vaforvets.va.gov/Pages/default.aspx> or contact a coach at 1-855-824-8387.